



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR AESTHETICS POLICIES ON DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

These policies, approved by the American Society for Aesthetics Board of Trustees on July 12, 2019 (amended on February 14, 2022; April 10, 2023; and January 16, 2024) are effective immediately and completely supersede previous policies.

Freedom of expression and vigorous debate are crucial to scholarly exchange. The American Society for Aesthetics strongly values mutual respect and strives to provide an environment for scholarly exchange that is free from discrimination and harassment. The ASA is committed to providing a supportive environment—one that upholds values of inclusion, safety, and mutual respect—at the ASA annual meeting, divisional meetings, ASA-sponsored conferences, and other ASA-sponsored activities.

Accordingly, the ASA deplores all discrimination and harassment and is sensitive to the harm suffered by those who experience it. We expect participants in our meetings to demonstrate self-control and civility, even in the midst of strong disagreement, and not to engage in ad hominem attacks. Furthermore, we expect those participating in the ASA's meetings and events to treat others with respect and not to engage in behavior that is offensive, discriminatory, intimidating, or harassing. This expectation applies to our speakers, contractors, volunteers, and attendees.

Our standards do not tolerate any discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual's sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, physical appearance, class, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national identity, or employment status. They call for sensitivity to power dynamics, exhibited in part through respect for the ideas, work, personal autonomy, and contributions of individuals in more junior positions in the field and, more generally, respect and tolerance for people with worldviews, opinions, and experiences we might not share.

Participants in ASA meetings and other ASA-sponsored activities should hold themselves and each other to these standards.

Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Standards

The ASA prohibits harassment, discrimination, and contribution to an environment that a reasonable person would consider threatening, intimidating, hostile, or offensive. The ASA also prohibits advocating for or encouraging such conduct, which includes, but is not limited to:

Generally prohibited conduct:

- Remarks that reinforce damaging social structures of domination (e.g., related to an individual's sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, physical appearance, class, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national identity, employment status, linguistic style, fluency, or accent, or other legally protected characteristics).
- Photography or recording without the subject's consent.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Retaliation against any person for consulting or cooperating with members of the Committee on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior or for filing a complaint.
- Demeanor and behavior that is recognized or ought to be recognized as offensive to non-dominant or vulnerable groups.
- Verbal abuse, jokes, and epithets that target race, ethnicity, religion, or national identity.
- Communication includes spoken and written words in or on social media supported by ASA, clothing, etc.

Sexual harassment:

- Conduct of a sexual nature that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome, which may include instances of non-consensual sexual contact, stalking, repeated flirtations, lewd or lascivious behavior, advances, propositions, and pressure to engage in sexual activity.
- Inappropriate use of sexual images in public spaces, including the display of offensive or sexually suggestive objects or pictures, apart from purposes of scholarly discussion. If potentially offensive content is included in examples presented at an ASA program, audience members should be alerted first.
- Communication includes spoken and written words in or on social media supported by ASA, clothing, etc.
- Note: Neither occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature nor consensual personal or social relationships constitute sexual harassment.

Membership information and compliance

This policy will be available in full on the ASA web site and will be published annually in the ASA Newsletter.

All transactions on the ASA web site (e.g., membership, meeting registration, donations) will require confirmation that the transactor has read and agrees to comply with this policy and that the transactor understands that violations of this policy may result in removal from the meeting and/or a prohibition against attending future meetings. Notice of this requirement will include

a link to the complete policy. Comparable steps shall be taken when on-site or mail-in transactions are permitted.

Reporting

If any ASA member is the target of or witness to harassment, discrimination, or other inappropriate behavior, that member is encouraged to report the incident to the ASA National Ombudsperson, an ASA Divisional Ombudsperson, a member of the Committee on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior, or an ASA Trustee

There are two ways to involve an ASA Ombudsperson or member of the Committee on DHRB: consultation or filing a complaint. We encourage consultation as a first step.

1) Consultation:

Any member of the Society may inform an ASA Ombudsperson, a member of the Committee on DHRB, or an ASA Trustee or Officer about a possible violation of the policy. If the incident has been reported to someone other than an ASA Ombudsperson, that person will inform an ASA Ombudsperson. If the ASA Ombudsperson informed of the incident has a conflict of interest, or cannot for some other reason act in the matter, they will refer the matter to another ASA Ombudsperson, who will serve as facilitator.

The facilitator will conduct an initial interview as soon as possible with the person or persons reported as the target of disrespectful behavior or harassment, and determine what action that person or persons want taken, if any.

If endorsed as appropriate by both the facilitator and the person or persons targeted in violation of this policy, the facilitator will attempt to bring about an informal resolution. Engaging in an informal resolution process does not remove the right to file a complaint, in the event that the informal process fails.

If an informal resolution is obtained, the facilitator will submit a confidential report of the incident, summary of findings, and informal resolution to the National Ombudsperson (if the National Ombudsperson is not facilitating) and to the ASA Officers.

The ASA does not maintain an anonymous hotline for consultation or complaints. If anyone experiences or witnesses an example of inappropriate conduct addressed in this policy, but is not comfortable consulting with any of the persons listed in paragraph 1) of this section, that person is encouraged to talk with a trusted friend immediately to establish an evidentiary record that might be available for future consultations or future complaints.

2) Complaint:

Any member of the ASA may report an alleged incident to an ASA Ombudsperson or member of the Committee on DHRB. A formal (i.e., written) complaint may be filed by (1) someone who is the target of disrespectful behavior, discrimination, or harassment; or (2) a member who witnesses a violation of the policy; or (3) any member(s) of the Board of Trustees or Officers. Reports must be filed within one year after the incident.

All complaints will be investigated by the National Ombudsperson unless the National Ombudsperson has a conflict of interest, or cannot for some other reason act in the matter, in which case they will select a Divisional Ombudsperson to be the investigator. The ASA Board reserves the right to appoint an external investigator in place of the National Ombudsperson. In cases of allegations involving assault or sexual assault, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with ASA legal counsel, shall have the option of appointing a disinterested external investigator who will prepare a report for submission to the Board of Trustees.

The investigator will interview the complainant, respondent and any witnesses. The investigator may or may not recommend a formal sanction against the respondent. The ASA President and Board must approve any sanction. If any Trustee or Officer filed the initial formal complaint, that person(s) shall be excluded from the vote by trustees and officers on any recommended sanction. (The only exception is for interim remedial action, in which case the President may act alone. See "Resolution" below for an example.)

If the respondent is a Board member or Officer of the ASA, then they will recuse themselves from any discussions with the Board about the complaint.

The investigator will file a written report of the complaint and the investigation. The complainant and respondent will receive a summary of the report with all identifying details, including names of witnesses, redacted.

3) Resolution

Whether or not a formal complaint is filed, if there is good reason to think that a serious violation of this policy has occurred, the ASA President, in consultation with the Ombudsperson, may take interim remedial action, such as immediately revoking the conference registration of the respondent.

If there is good reason to think that the ASA President has violated the policy, then the Vice-President will act in their stead with regards to the complaint.

The resolution of a complaint may include, but is not restricted to, one or more of the following:

- The respondent makes a verbal apology to the complainant.

- The respondent submits, via the National Ombudsperson, a written apology to the complainant.
- The respondent voluntarily leaves conference for the duration of that conference.
- The ASA President (or their delegate, if the President is not attending the conference) revokes conference registration of the respondent while conference is in progress.
- The respondent agrees not to attend ASA meetings or sponsored conferences for one year or a longer period (with compliance monitored by the ASA Secretary).
- The ASA revokes membership of the respondent, either for a given period or in perpetuity.
- Any other such restitution, as determined by complainant, respondent, and the National Ombudsperson, following consultation with the Committee on DHRB.

ASA Ombudspersons

ASA Ombudspersons, National and Divisional, are the primary resources and points of contact for ASA members regarding concerns about discrimination, including sexual harassment, which is recognized as a form of discrimination. ASA Ombudspersons are responsible for educating the ASA membership about this policy.

1) The ASA National Ombudsperson

- a. The ASA National Ombudsperson will be appointed by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation from the Appointments Committee.
- b. When possible, the National Ombudsperson will have served as Divisional Ombudsperson; in exceptional cases, the National Ombudsperson may be named from members of the ASA who have not served as Divisional Ombudsperson, in consultation with the Committee on DHRB, the Feminist Caucus Committee, and the Diversity Committee.
- c. The term of appointment will be three years, once renewable.
- d. When possible, the National Ombudsperson will attend the Annual Meeting of the ASA in the role of ombudsperson; when this is not possible, the National Ombudsperson will arrange for a Divisional Ombudsperson to attend in their stead.
- e. The ASA shall provide support of \$1400 to the National Ombudsperson for travel to each ASA meeting they attend in the role of ombudsperson.
- f. The National Ombudsperson will work in conjunction with, and supervise, the Divisional Ombudspersons.

2) The ASA Divisional Ombudspersons

- a. ASA Divisional Ombudspersons will be appointed by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation from the Appointments Committee.
- b. When possible, Divisional Ombudspersons will have served on the Committee on DHRB; in exceptional cases, Divisional Ombudspersons may be named from members of the ASA who have not served on the Committee on DHRB, in consultation with the National Ombudsperson.
- c. The term of appointment will two years, twice renewable.
- d. Each Divisional Ombudsperson will be assigned a home division, and will attend, when possible, the meetings of their home division; when a Divisional Ombudsperson cannot attend a meeting of their home division, they will arrange to have another ASA Ombudsperson attend in their stead, in consultation with the National Ombudsperson.
- e. The ASA shall provide support of \$1400 to the National Ombudsperson for travel to each ASA meeting they attend in the role of ombudsperson.
- f. Divisional Ombudspersons will work in conjunction with, and under the supervision of, the National Ombudsperson.
- g. The ASA will provide training for Divisional Ombudspersons in advance of attending their first meeting as divisional ombudsperson.

ASA Ombudspersons shall receive complaints of discrimination and harassment and, where possible, serve as a resource to members regarding such complaints. ASA Ombudspersons shall serve as a resource by, among other things, (i) educating the complainant about this policy; (ii) facilitating informal resolution of concerns where appropriate; (iii) investigating complaints of harassment and discrimination; and (iv) recommending sanctions where appropriate. ASA Ombudspersons should, if necessary, be able to consult with a complainant rapidly, within a 24-hour period.

ASA Ombudspersons do not provide legal advice.

Where appropriate, ASA Ombudspersons shall consult with the Feminist Caucus Committee or the Diversity Committee for advice regarding specific complaints.

Each written complaint will be investigated and a confidential report regarding that complaint will be submitted to the Board. (Ordinarily, the National Ombudsperson will do the investigation. If they have a conflict of interest, then a Divisional Ombudsperson will investigate. The ASA reserves the right to appoint an external investigator instead of the National Ombudsperson.)

The National Ombudsperson prepares two annual reports. The first report, containing very general information about the number of members who have consulted with ASA

Ombudspersons and the types of complaints and issues raised, is provided to the Board of Trustees and is available to ASA members as an addendum to the minutes of the Board meeting at which it was submitted.

The second report describes each consultation and what resolution, if any, was achieved, with all identifying information removed. This report is held as a confidential record in the ASA's national office and may be consulted only by officers of the ASA in the course of their duties.

The positions of National and Divisional Ombudsperson are volunteer. If professional services are necessary to respond to a formal complaint, consulting rates will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Committee on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior

The Committee on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior shall consist of six persons, nominated (including self-nominated), with election by the ASA Board of Trustees. Nominations shall be solicited by bulk e-mail sent to all current ASA members, with additional announcements, as appropriate, on the ASA web site announcements, Facebook, Twitter, and the *ASA Newsletter*.

The nomination deadline shall be September 15 with submissions to be sent to secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org

Nomination shall include a short CV and cover letter addressing interest in and qualifications for membership on the Committee on DHRB, including how they would contribute to the diversity of the Committee on DHRB. Nominees may also identify any experience relevant to the role of Committee on DHRB members, but this is not required and its omission shall not be considered as disqualifying.

Terms will extend from January 1 – December 31 for three years. Members may serve one additional term after initial appointment; after one year off the Committee on DHRB, previous members may again be considered for membership.

When applications are received on September 15, the Secretary-Treasurer will share them with the leadership (chairs and assistant chairs) of the Feminist Caucus Committee and Diversity Committee. Each Committee will be asked to identify preferred candidates, after appropriate consultation with the membership of the full committee of current ASA members. At least three preferred candidates should be recommended, listed either alphabetically or rank-ordered, by each committee. The Officers and Trustees will be required to give very serious consideration to these recommendations from each committee in making their final selections. The lists of preferred candidates by the committees must be sent to the Officers no later than December 1, so the Trustee balloting can be completed in December.

In making the selections, the Officers and Trustees should be mindful of the overall makeup of the Committee on DHRB and aim for diversity in all its forms, including race, gender, sexual

orientation, disability, seniority and security within the profession, and experience with comparable institutional committees.

Members must be members of the ASA throughout their term of service on the Committee on DHRB.

Working with ASA Ombudspersons, the Committee on DHRB shall be responsible for making recommendations for future revisions of the DHRB policy, as appropriate, with final revisions approved by the Board of Trustees.

Members should be available to serve as Acting National or Divisional Ombudsperson in the rare event that no ASA Ombudsperson is able to attend an ASA meeting. Members should be available to assist in representing the Committee on DHRB at ASA Annual Meetings and Divisional meetings, if no ASA Ombudspersons is unable to attend, with appropriate travel support from the ASA.

Members shall assist in development and implementation of appropriate educational and training activities for members on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior.

The National Ombudsperson shall be considered a voting member of the Committee on DHRB. A quorum for purposes of voting shall be 50% of the membership plus one. Members shall be subject to all ASA policies, including but not limited to the current policies on Conflict of Interest and on Privacy and Data. The National Ombudsperson shall serve as chair of the Committee on DHRB.

As the membership of the Committee on DHRB regularly rotates, the names shall be available on the ASA web site with this posting of the policy, once approved.